SARS cases

765. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases of SARS reported in the country alongwith the number of casualties;

(b) whether it is a fact that many of the reported cases did not conform to the konwn symptoms of this deadly infection;

(c) if so, whether the existing laboratory facilities are inadequate for carrying out such tests; and

(d) if not, the details of the reason for differences in the WHO and the Government's announcements on the SARS cases in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) The World Health Organisation (WHO) defined SARS in two categories *i.e.* 'suspect' SARS and 'probable' SARS. Government of India adopted the WHO case definition. Accordingly only three 'probable' and ten 'suspect' cases were reported. There were no deaths due to SARS in the country.

For these cases, the two apex laboratories, National Institute of Communicable Diseases, Delhi and National Institute of Virology, Pune were found adequate. In addition, three more laboratories were geared up and kept in readiness to test the samples for SARS.

The number of cases reported in India differed as WHO reported only 'probable' cases and not 'suspect' cases.

Disposal of waste in hospitals

766. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 40,000 used syringes are generated by 85 hospitals in the capital every day;

(b) whether only 40 per cent of these are destroyed or incinerated and recycled syringes are used on almost two-third patients in the country; and